

Illinois

"Where Ideas Become Reality"

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D

USDA NRCS

*Resource Conservation and
Development Profiles*

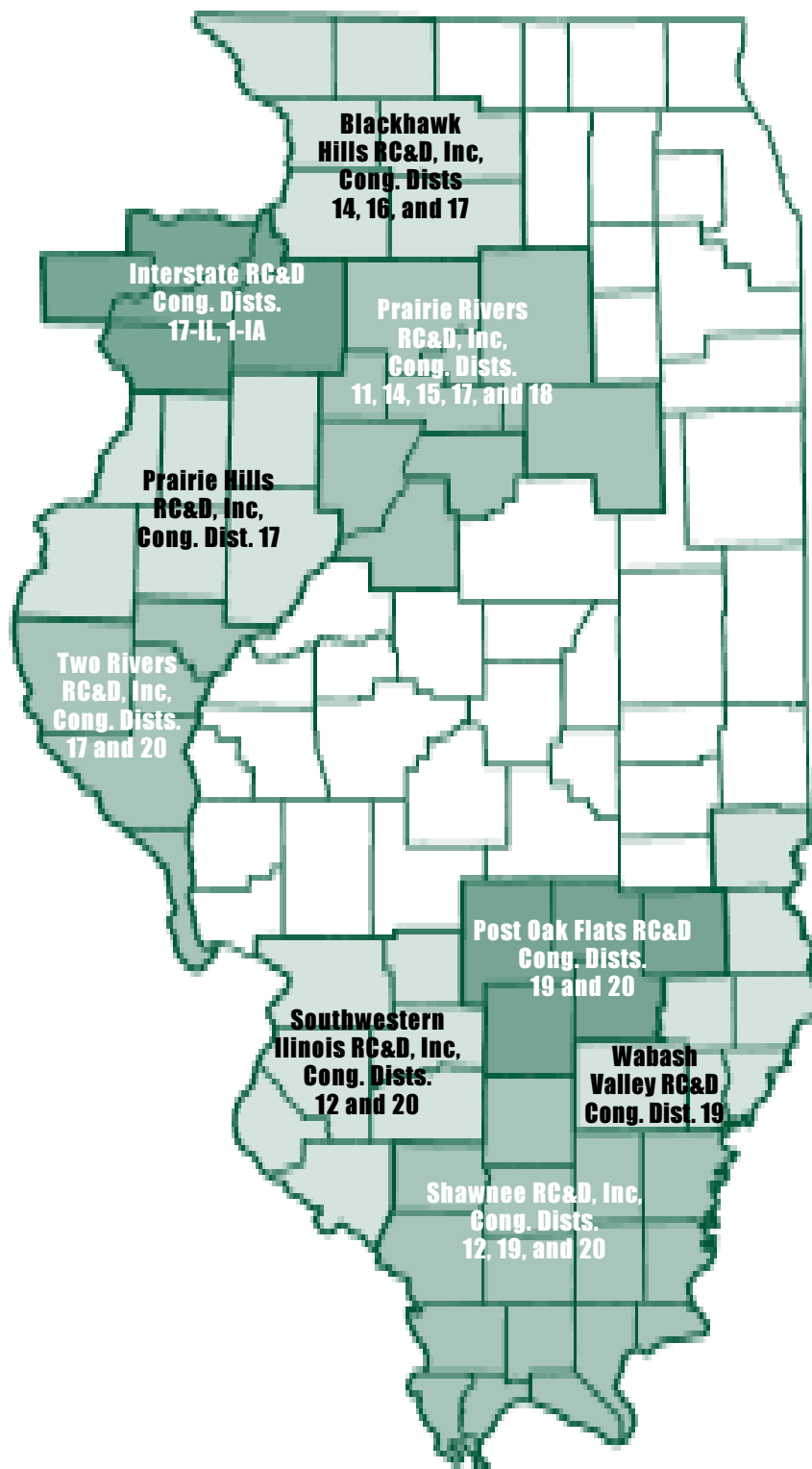
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Nedda Simon, President

***Resource
Conservation
Development — Powerful words***

Resource — the gift of varied soils, abundant water, and a temperate, favorable climate reminds us of the need for *Conservation* of these gifts. Put the first two together, and then add the *Development* of our areas, in an intelligent and healthy manner, and we have the heart of the council's work.

Farmers, small business, and industry in the cities, towns, and villages must work together to share and preserve our tangible resources as well as sharing and preserving the human potential.

As an Association, and as local councils and individuals, we must be creative and energetic in our efforts to find a way to gain financial stability. We welcome any financial support from others who share our mission. With financial certainty we can achieve the goals set forth by our strategic plan.

The Illinois Association of RC&D Areas has a strategic plan in place to help local councils achieve their goals and to lend support to the efforts of all the communities, large and small, to enhance the lives of their people. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has contributed extensively in our efforts to market our achievements and implement our mission. We extend our gratitude for their ongoing encouragement.

The continuing challenge for us all is to help develop councils across the state, so that all of the people of Illinois can benefit from the friendship, cooperation, education, and improvement that RC&D stands for in bringing a better life to us and future generations.

*Nedda Simon, President
Illinois Association of RC&D Areas*

“The mission of the Illinois Association of RC&D Areas is to encourage unity and the expansion of the RC&D program throughout the State of Illinois, enhancing economic opportunities and education in the development and wise use of natural and human resources.”

National RC&D Accomplishments

- RC&D efforts have improved 990,000 acres of wildlife habitat, 78,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, and 1,300 miles of streams.
- RC&D Councils leveraged \$175,000,000 in local, state and federal external grants in support of locally led projects.
- Projects completed in 2000 resulted in an investment of \$1 billion in local communities.
- RC&D Councils have documented \$14 in benefits for each dollar invested in the RC&D program.
- RC&D projects completed in the year 2000 created 3,700 jobs.
- RC&D projects completed in the year 2000 resulted in the creation of 606 new businesses.
- RC&D projects completed in the year 2000 resulted in the expansion of 1,814 businesses.
- Projects completed in 2000 helped 1 million people develop new skills and assisted 256,000 economic or socially disadvantaged people.

RC&D Councils

- There were 33 new authorizations for new RC&Ds for Fiscal Year 2000 made by the Secretary of Agriculture. The total number of RC&D Councils across the nation is 348.
- By law, 450 RC&D Councils are allowed nationally.
- An average-sized RC&D area covers 7 counties.
- RC&D Councils are composed of "Sponsors" which typically represent local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and County Governments.
- 79% of the counties in the United States are served by RC&D Councils. (3,153 Counties in the USA - 2,492 in RC&D areas)
- RC&D Council's are led by more than 24,000 volunteers who provide the grassroots leadership for their communities.
- RC&D Councils serve 13 million people in communities with populations of less than 2,500.
- Councils provide a focal point of local leadership to bring together the efforts of local, state, and federal agencies to improve the economic, social, and environmental well being of their area.
- Councils serve as a conduit for USDA programs that assist in implementing their area plans.
- All RC&D Councils have area plans that define their hopes and dreams as goals and objectives.

Resource Conservation and Development Program

History & Successes

History of RC&D

Established by the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, the Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D) began in 1964. The program was reauthorized by the Food and Agricultural Act of 1981. The Act empowers the United States Department of Agriculture to provide technical and financial assistance to state and local units of government and nonprofit organizations in rural areas, which need help in conserving natural resources and solving local problems. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) facilitates and administers the RC&D program on authority of Congress. The Resource Conservation and Development program is based on a number of concepts that make it a truly unique government program. These concepts include:

- The value of public/private partnerships in making the best use of limited resources
- The value of grassroots involvement in making decisions about local areas
- Bringing USDA agencies together to focus on the same problems and opportunities
- Leveraging limited federal dollars with private funds to accomplish goals
- Working toward the goal of community sustainability
- Achieving a balance between rural economic development and natural resource protection

What is RC&D?

RC&D programs help community leaders develop rural economies by improving and conserving local natural resources. A coordinator, working through the NRCS, assists each RC&D area council. The council identifies the areas' problems and then sets its own goals for finding and carrying out solutions to these problems. Nationwide, 348 RC&D areas have been authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture. The RC&D program is a unique blend of private enterprise and creative federalism. Program activities are initiated and directed at the local level by volunteers. It is a USDA interagency program that encourages the blending of natural resource use with local economic and social values. Its customers have a major voice in how the program activities are carried out in their respective communities. Economic and sociological rationales have been considered in selection of RC&D areas, and their continued funding and support.

How does RC&D help?

About 1,400 projects are undertaken nationally by RC&D councils each year. Current program objectives focus on:

- Improvement of quality of life achieved through natural resource conservation and community development to lead to sustainable communities
- Prudent use (development), management, and conservation of natural resources
- Social, economic, and environmental improvement
- Local leadership providing program decision making
- Strengthening local citizens' abilities to use available sources of assistance through USDA agency partnerships

Because councils are composed of local leaders who address local issues, they are able to make things happen in a quick and timely manner.

How does RC&D operate?

Each RC&D area, which usually consists of several counties, has a council composed of local citizens who serve on a voluntary basis. Council members commonly include elected officials, SWCD directors, county board members, local entrepreneurs, teachers, farmers, ranchers, and others who want to solve local problems. These individuals initiate and direct the process of planning RC&D projects, develop and implement area plans, and then act to maintain plans. Technical assistance may come from other USDA agencies, state or local governments, local conservation districts, or private industry. Financial assistance may come from loans, grants, cost-share agreements, or private donations, private foundations, and other state and federal agencies.

Program Successes:

During RC&Ds 37-year span, RC&D councils have completed about 26,000 projects. About 3,000 of those received financial assistance from USDA. All involved land conservation, water management, community development, or environmental enhancement. Forestry, water quality and quantity, information and education, and recreation and tourism are other priorities of the RC&D program. National annual volunteer contributions in time, cash, materials, and grants are estimated at more than \$30 million.

Want more information?

For more information contact your local RC&D office or Illinois NRCS State Conservationist, Bill Gradle, at 217/353.6600 or visit the USDA-NRCS Illinois website at www.il.nrcs.usda.gov

Did You Know? Info & Facts

Resource Conservation and Development Program

Did You Know?

In 1962, Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman initiated the Resource Conservation and Development Program as an experiment in local leadership for rural America. The results have been the formation of one of the greatest success stories in government!

The RC&D program is designed to foster local decision-making in addressing natural resource and rural economic development problems. RC&D project areas are approved by the Secretary of Agriculture through a competitive process. There are 348 authorized RC&D areas within the U.S. Each RC&D area is governed by a Board of Directors called the "Council." RC&D Councils are composed of representatives of local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and County Governments, and other local community leaders.

The USDA Resource Conservation and Development Program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The principle means of support provided by USDA is in the staffing of a Project Coordinator and Program Assistant. The primary role of the staff is to support and help implement the Council's Annual Plan of Work.

The RC&D Councils support local networking, coalition-building, partnership-building, and political networking.

RC&D Councils are organized as 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations and serve as a vital focus point for many

local, state and federal programs. Major services provided to project sponsors include project development, group facilitation, alternative funding strategies, grant writing, and grant management support.

Currently, there are eight authorized RC&D Councils in Illinois and one RC&D Council seeking federal approval and authorization. All Illinois RC&D Council's have carefully developed a broad network of partners. Each belongs to the Illinois Association of RC&D's, the North Central Association of RC&D's, and the National Association of RC&D's. These larger organizations serve to support state networks of councils, share ideas and information, and guide individual and statewide projects towards success.

RC&D Councils have evolved through their network of volunteers and become a key organization in addressing natural resource and rural economic development issues. Planning strategies which involve local people who bring together groups, government agencies, and others have been instrumental in improving local economies, developing and protecting natural resources, and solving social needs. The RC&D Program is the only federally funded volunteer program that is governed at the local (grass roots) level.

Clearly, the RC&D Councils have earned the title of "Chamber of Commerce for Rural America."



*The Blackhawk Hills RC&D provides service to Carroll,
Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside
Counties of Illinois.*



2.5 million acres

Background

The RC&D program is funded through the Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Through a long range regional plan, the Council develops a strategy to meet economic, natural resource, and community needs. The Blackhawk Hills RC&D serves Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside Counties of Illinois.

Mission

To provide leadership in organizing regional needs and concerns as they relate to the economy, environment, and society and to enhance local leadership by forming coalitions and partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies, groups, and organizations to assist in solving needs and concerns.

Current Projects and Activities:

Economic Development

The RC&D Council also serves the region as an Economic Development District (EDD). The EDD was established under criteria of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The program's purpose is to accelerate overall economic development program planning on a regional basis and to use all federal, state, and local agencies, groups, and organizations in implementing the plan.

Dry Fire Hydrants

The RC&D was awarded a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to purchase dry fire hydrant systems. Dry hydrants will be placed strategically around the RC&D area in ponds, lakes, streams and other bodies of water, eliminating the need for fire trucks to return to town to refill in the event of a rural fire. The first dry hydrant was installed at O'Connell's Yogi Bear Jellystone Campground in Amboy, Illinois.

Thermal Imaging Cameras

The RC&D assisted area legislators with organizing a list of local fire districts needing Thermal Imagers. Senator Todd Sieben and Representatives Jerry Mitchell and I. Ronald Lawfer contributed \$10,000 to each applicant rural fire district to purchase a Thermal Imaging Camera. A total of 31 fire districts took advantage of the program.

Natural Resources Planning Conference

The RC&D hosted a Natural Resources Planning Conference that focused on the natural resource issues that

communities need to address when planning for growth. Programs discussed included: the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' C-2000, Community Forestry and Open Space Lands Acquisition & Development programs; the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's 319 Program; the Illinois Department of Transportation's T-21 program; and Foundations.

Blackhawk Hills Website

The Blackhawk Hills EDD was awarded a grant from Alliant Energy for the development of a website. The website offers basic information about the RC&D/EDD programs and services available to Northwest Illinois. The web address is www.blackhawkhills.com.

Lower Rock River Ecosystem Partnership

The Blackhawk Hills RC&D assisted the Lower Rock River Ecosystem Partnership (LRREP) steering committee with the development of a Strategic Long-Range Plan. The LRREP received a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the creation of a plan that would detail the natural resource and other concerns of the watershed. Blackhawk Hills assisted by facilitating the meetings at which participants identified issues affecting the watershed, as well as possible solutions. The RC&D compiled the data into a draft plan, and will be responsible for seeing the plan through final printing and distribution.

Marketing Initiatives

The Blackhawk Hills RC&D/EDD furthered its marketing efforts with several projects. The RC&D Council received a marketing grant from Lt. Governor Corinne Wood via the Illinois Association of RC&D Areas. The grant will be used to purchase a tabletop display to promote the programs and services of the RC&D. The display will be shared with numerous groups in each of the six counties. The RC&D and EDD have developed PowerPoint presentations that explain what the Resource Conservation and Development program and Economic Development District are and how people can get involved.

Business Retention Strategy Plan

The Blackhawk Hills EDD is developing a Business Retention Strategy Plan for Northwest Illinois. The plan will examine present industries and their varying needs; such as worker training/re-training, potential expansion needs, infrastructure needs, etc. The goal of this project is to bring together businesses/industries, state and local officials, community organizations and educational institutions to focus on the need to keep present jobs in tact.

Community Planning

The Blackhawk Hills EDD provided community planning assistance in communities throughout the six-county District. Each community received information to develop a local strategic plan to address specific community problems covering a diverse range of key issues including; water and sewer improvements, natural resources, industrial park development, downtown revitalization, community leadership development, workforce development and establishment of local control for responding to and initiating business development opportunities.

Greenways & Trails Support

The RC&D/EDD has provided planning support to the Greenways & Trails efforts in Whiteside and Lee Counties. The organization is also pledging its own support and encouraging others to support a six-county Regional Greenways & Trails Plan project. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee, whose members represent each of the six counties within the District, initiated the idea for the project.

RC&D National Meeting

Blackhawk Hills Council President, Lynne Kilker, and staff attended the National RC&D Conference in Ogden, Utah. Held every third year, the conference allows those involved in RC&D nationwide to gather and share ideas and experiences.

Regional Workshops and Meetings

The Blackhawk Hills RC&D and EDD have hosted a number of informative workshops and meetings. Some examples include: the RC&D Annual Meeting; the EDD Summit; the annual Legislative Roundtable; a Project Financing workshop; and an Enterprise Zone and Tax Increment Financing District Workshop.

Regional Committees

The RC&D continues to host regional committee meetings to stay informed of economic, environmental, and social needs as they relate to county boards, communities, development corporations, chambers of commerce, and business and industry. Each committee has its own activities and programs. This action alone saves the region thousands of dollars annually. Committees include: RC&D Council/Economic Development District, County Board Chairpersons, County Overall Economic Development, Zoning Administrators, Natural Resource, and District Conservationists.

Council Representatives

County Board Members:

John Smith, Carroll Co.
John Rutherford, JoDaviess Co.
Isaac Mercer, Lee Co.
Shirley Clayton, Ogle Co.
John Blum, Stephenson Co.
Sarah McNeill, Whiteside Co.

Council Officers:

Lynne Kilker, President
Glen Kuhlemier, Vice-President
Della Moen, Secretary/Treasurer

SWCD Representatives:

Erik Torrison, Carroll Co.
Brent Offenheiser, JoDaviess Co.
Tom Millard, Lee Co.
Lynne Kilker, Ogle Co.
Chuck Moen, Stephenson Co.
Tim Keller, Whiteside Co.

Area Representatives:

Betty Harms, Carroll Co.
Helen Schamberger, JoDaviess Co.
Russ Renner, Lee Co.
Curtis Cook, Ogle Co.
Della Moen, Stephenson Co.
Glen Kuhlemier, Whiteside Co.

Staff:

David Dornbusch, RC&D Coordinator
Julie Jacobs, Program Assistant
Steve Haring, EDD Director
Theresa Bennett, Community Planner
Glynis Lackland, District Secretary

U.S. Congressional Districts:

14, 16, 17

IL Representative Districts:

70, 71, 73, 74

IL Senate Districts:

35, 36, 37

Interstate RC&D



The Interstate RC&D provides service to Muscatine and Scott Counties in Iowa and Mercer, Rock Island, and Henry Counties of Illinois.



1.8 million acres

Background:

Interstate RC&D represents the only multi-state RC&D area in Illinois and Iowa. Representatives from 5 County Boards and 5 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the two-state area formed the RC&D Council in May of 1995 after two years of planning and information gathering. Interstate RC&D was federally authorized March 17, 1998.

Mission

A highly recognized, locally driven catalyst for exploring innovative approaches to promote resource conservation and development.

Current Projects and Activities:

Illinois-Iowa Two-State Annual Meeting

Interstate RC&D hosted the first ever two-state Iowa League of RC&D's and Illinois Association of RC&D's Annual Meeting and Summer Conference. The meeting and conference was held at the Holiday Inn, Davenport, Iowa on September 12 & 13, 2000. There were approximately 125 people in attendance from both Illinois and Iowa, and Reggie Skains, President, National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils also attended the meeting.

Legislative Breakfasts

Interstate RC&D hosted the second annual legislative breakfast for both Iowa and Illinois Legislators. Many state and federal legislators were in attendance and good networking between the Council Members and the Legislators took place. The Council will be hosting the breakfast again in fiscal year 2001.

Multi-State Direct Seed Web Page

Interstate RC&D wrote and submitted a grant and was awarded \$10,000 to create a multi-state direct seeding web page. The U.S. Forest Service, Rural Development through Forestry, Special Project Program, awarded the grant. The web site will establish an information clearinghouse for tree seed users and suppliers. The web site will facilitate direct seeding as a means of establishing a stand of trees by providing information and coordinating a communication network for seed buyers, sellers, seedling nurseries, direct seeding contractors, equipment dealers, forestry professionals and others to help meet the needs of the market place. You can visit the web site at www.directseeding.org.

Outdoor Education Program – ECO Camp

On October 17, 2000 more than 200 Rock Island and Henry County students in third through sixth grades participated in an Outdoor Nature Education program held at Loud Thunder Forest Preserve. This program is designed to help young students learn more about soils and forestry management in an outdoor setting. Interstate RC&D teamed with Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Rock Island County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), University of Illinois Extension of Rock Island County, Rock Island County Regional Office of Education, Rock Island County Board's Forest Preserve Committee and others to host this one-day event. A spring session in 2001 has been planned for the students to come and learn more about ecosystems and water resources. Interstate RC&D has submitted and received a \$5,000 grant to the U.S. EPA to help fund this project so that this can become an annual event.

Atalissa Flood Control Project

Interstate RC&D assisted the Muscatine County SWCD with writing and submitting a grant to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), Watershed Protection Fund to assist the town of Atalissa, Iowa with flood control structures above the town. IDALS awarded Muscatine County SWCD \$56,200 with total project costs estimated at \$81,000.

Mud Creek

Interstate RC&D has been assisting Muscatine County SWCD write and submit two different grants to help with Mud Creek Watershed. One grant was submitted to the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of Muscatine County SWCD for educational and informational meetings about water quality issues affecting Mud Creek. The grant was for \$2,500 with total project costs of \$6,200 to implement these meetings. The second grant was given to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR), 319 program, for a watershed inventory and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP) in the Mud Creek Watershed. Iowa DNR awarded Muscatine County SWCD the grant for \$302,500. The total project costs including local funds and contributions, was \$1,244,000.

Project S.M.A.R.T. Bus

Interstate RC&D wrote and submitted two grants to the Illinois Association of RC&D Areas and was awarded \$4000 and \$2,478 to convert a school bus into a natural resources based educational and informational traveling center. The bus is called S.M.A.R.T. Bus, which stands for "Sharp Minds Are Reading Thoroughly." Interstate RC&D will be promoting child and adult learning and education through the use of reading material and informational presentations and programs in the 5 county RC&D area. This bus will travel from June through August to rural communities and economically and socially disadvantaged areas providing books and informal presentations and programs conducted by area speakers and presenters. Through implementation of this project, marketing and promoting of Interstate RC&D and the RC&D program in Illinois will be realized.

Ferry Boat Shuttle

Interstate RC&D is working with the Yellowbanks Heritage Association to investigate the possibility of developing a ferryboat shuttle service connecting New Boston, Illinois and a location in Iowa to be determined. A preliminary meeting was held in January 2001 to discuss the project with stakeholders and legislators from both Illinois and Iowa.

Learn to Burn Workshop

Interstate RC&D, NRCS, Rock Island County SWCD and IDNR cooperated in conducting a Prescribed Burning training/workshop for landowners with native grass plantings. About sixty people participated in the workshop.

Boston Bay Project

Interstate RC&D is partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), NRCS, Mercer County SWCD, Boston Bay Drainage District, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), IDNR and others to complete a habitat rehabilitation and enhancement project on Boston Bay. A request for funding has been sent to the USACOE for consideration.

Council Representatives

County Board Members:

Mike Sponsler, Mercer Co.
Jim King, Henry Co.
Robert Bigford, Rock Island Co.
Roger Eichelberger, Muscatine Co. (IA)
Roger Kean, Scott Co (IA)

Council Officers

Patrick McVeigh, President
David Thompson, Vice-President
Curtis Weiss, Secretary/Treasurer

Members-At-Large

Gena McCullough, Rock Island Co.
Curtis Weiss, Muscatine Co. (IA)
Bob Doerscher, Scott Co. (IA)
David Thompson, Henry Co.
Terry Elliott, Mercer Co.

Associate Members

Liz Massarolo, Rock Island County
Andrew Larson, Henry Co.

Staff:

Mark Jackson Coordinator
Jessica Engstrom, Program Assistant

SWCD Representatives:

Patrick McVeigh, Mercer Co.
Charles Curry, Henry Co.
Rollo Searl, Rock Island Co.
Henry Marquard, Muscatine Co. (IA)
George Braden, Scott Co. (IA)

U.S. Congressional Districts

(IL) 17
(IA) 1

Senatorial Districts:

(IL) 36, 37, 47
(IA) 19, 20, 21, 22 & 24

Representative Districts:

(IL) 71, 72, 73 & 94
(IA) 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47 & 48

Post Oak Flats RC&D

Not Federally
Authorized



6414 State Rt. 37, Alma, IL 62807

Ph: 618/548-3654

Email: alley@gtec.com

*The Post Oak Flats RC&D provides service
to Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, and
Marion Counties of Illinois.*



1.8 million acres

Mission:

To provide local leadership and establish the framework of carrying out a comprehensive plan to address conservation, development and proper use of the area's resources.

Background:

In June of 1991, representatives from the County Boards and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) in Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion Counties joined together to form the Post Oak Flats Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council.

Post Oak Flats RC&D Council is seeking authorization from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Authorization from the USDA would allow the Council to receive financial and technical assistance for use in achieving the goals and objectives the Council has identified.

Objectives:

The Post Oak Flats RC&D Council is providing local leadership and the framework required to develop and carry out a plan of action for the conservation, development, and wise use of the resources of the area. The Council had identified several immediate concerns within the Post Oak Flats area. These include: Declining economic and service bases, livestock waste management, and water quality and quantity.

Current Projects and Activities:

Used Tire Collection

The Post Oak Flats RC&D, in cooperation with the Illinois EPA, conducted a used tire collection program. The program gave area residents an opportunity to dispose of waste tires at no cost. Proper disposal of used tires eliminates potential breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes. Tires collected will be modified for second uses, such as all weather tracks at area schools and fuel additives at coal burning utility plants and cement kilns. The collection was open to all residents of Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion Counties.

Dry Hydrants

The Post Oak Flats RC&D received a grant through the USDA Forestry Service to install twelve dry hydrants in the five-county region. The purpose of the dry hydrants is to provide fire protection to under-served rural areas lacking an adequate water supply. Installation of the projects involves the cooperation of various rural fire protection districts. The location of the dry hydrants will be entered into a state-wide database.

Public Service Announcements

The Post Oak Flats RC&D received funding for producing a series of Public Service Announcements through the USDA Capacity Building Program. A variety of sixty and thirty-second radio announcements have been written and produced for distribution to more than 250 radio stations across the State of Illinois. The content of the Public Service Announcements will provide residents of Illinois with a better understanding of the function of the RC&D program. It will also introduce the concept of forming an RC&D Council in areas of the state not currently served by RC&D.

Teen REACH

The Post Oak Flats RC&D assisted the Cra-Wa-La Community Services Organization by developing a grant proposal for the I-Can youth organization in Centralia. Teen REACH is a community outreach program administered by the Department of Human Services. The grant proposal calls for implementing after school and summertime programs for at-risk youths. Approximately \$250,000 in funding has been requested.

Ballard Nature Center

The Post Oak Flats RC&D is assisting the Ballard Nature Center in securing staffing for their environmental education center in Effingham County. Post Oak Flats RC&D has proposed a cooperative agreement between the Ballard Nature Center and the Regional Office of Education. The proposal calls for the Regional Office of Education to fund the salary for one staff person while the Ballard Center provides the office space and facilities.

Council Representatives

County Board Representatives:

Kenneth Collier, Marion Co.
Robert Stortzum, Clay Co.
Lloyd Ferguson, Jasper Co.
Charles Voelker, Effingham Co.
Greg Strobel, Fayette Co.

SWCD Representatives:

Roger Meyer
RC&D Council President, Marion Co.
6414 State Rt. 37
Alma, IL 62807
Ph. 618/548-3654

Jake Klein, Clay Co.
Joe Copper, Jasper Co.
Martin Franklin, Fayette Co.
Dan Doedtman, Effingham Co.

Members-At-Large:

Elizabeth Lybarger, Clay Co.
Larry Casey, Jasper Co.
Fred Keck, Fayette Co.
Wayne Behrns, Effingham Co.

Contact:

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6414 State Rt. 37
Alma, IL 62807
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U.S. Congressional Districts:

19 & 20

IL Senatorial Districts:

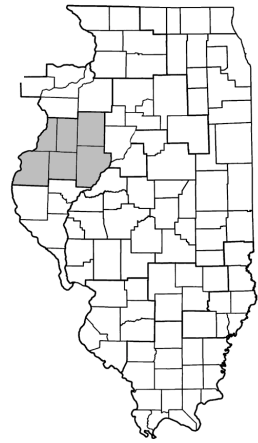
102, 108, & 109

IL Representative Districts:

51, 54, & 55



*The Prairie Hills RC&D provides service to
Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough,
and Warren Counties of Illinois.*



2.5 million acres

Background:

Prairie Hills is an Illinois nonprofit, US Internal Revenue Service 501 (c)(3) tax exempt, charitable organization. Prairie Hills was formed in 1976. Projects that provide opportunities to improve the quality of life, create employment opportunities, and protect resources are evident in many of our initiatives.

Mission:

We will carry out activities that accelerate the development, conservation, and wise use of human, financial, and natural resources in order to improve the standard of living within the area.

Current Projects and Activities: Rural Development Through Forestry

Three permanent full-time employees work for Prairie Hills. Also employed are 3 to 5 part-time employees per year for the past 8 years. Since 1992, the first year of the Rural Development Through Forestry program, Prairie Hills has received \$205,600 from USDA's Rural Development to establish a forestry consulting service. This has translated into nearly \$3 million in matching funds for forestry development. Accomplishments include: development of Forest Stewardship Plans on 5,000 acres; 3,200 acres of tree planting; timber improvement practices on 2,000 acres; 500 acres of prairie grass establishment, timber sales assistance to 80 private landowners; and technical assistance to 80 timber buyers and loggers.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Prairie Hills efforts have initiated four groups working in four counties with the ultimate goal of implementing GIS. More than 50 community leaders are on GIS committees that represent County governments municipalities, Community Colleges, federal government, private business and utilities. They have set up GPS demonstration areas and plan to hold informational workshops for elected officials and other key community leaders in order to raise their GIS awareness. Prairie Hills assisted three counties in obtaining more than \$443,000 in federal and state grants to purchase GIS-related data layers, which are the precursors for building the systems. Prairies Hills also assisted a county in obtaining \$180,000 to fund a GIS Implementation Plan, GIS hardware and software and to purchase data layers. Prairie Hills RC&D

received the coveted North Central Association of RC&D Areas "Outstanding Committee Award for 1999" for work accomplished in GIS.

Spoon River Ecosystem Partnership

This partnership involves more than 80 people from nine counties, federal, state, county and local governments who are dedicated to improve the social, economic, and natural resources of the Spoon River basin. This group changed its name from the "Spoon River Citizens Action Team" in order to participate in certain state conservation programs. Prairie Hills is the primary sponsor for the group. The Partnership has received over \$300,000 in grants to implement resource recovery projects. Prairie Hills RC&D facilitated the development of the Spoon River Ecosystem Watershed Management Plan that lays out a plan to enhance, restore, and protect the valuable natural resources of the watershed.

Conservation 2000 Ecosystem Program

Prairie Hills RC&D is organizing two new partnerships in western Illinois—the Upper Mississippi River Ecosystem Partnership and the Lamoine River Ecosystem Partnership. These partnerships will bring together people from all walks of life to address resource issues respective to a watershed.

Revolving Loan Fund Program

A \$300,000 grant from USDA's Rural Development has leveraged \$1.4 million in additional monies for ten new or expanding businesses since June 1998. The program has employed fifty people with an expected ten additional new hires. New businesses and expanded businesses are in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough and Warren Counties. Another \$200,000 grant has been received from Rural Development in 2001 to expand this highly successful program. Prairie Hills RC&D received the coveted North Central Association of RC&D Areas "Outstanding Project Award for 2000" for immense contributions to rural and economic development.

The National Tree Trust

The National Tree Trust and Prairie Hills RC&D have established a nursery with the cooperation of Western Illinois University and Prairie Hills Forestry Association for the purpose of giving free trees to communities. To date, the

National Tree Trust has donated more than 600 trees. The trees are grown to a height of about 10-12 feet. Public institutions are contacted to plant urban forests throughout west-central Illinois. Two hundred trees will be planted in 2001 on public property.

Rural Fire Protection

Prairie Hills RC&D received three grants from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to assist local fire departments and landowners to purchase "unpressurized" dry fire hydrants. The hydrants are placed in natural water bodies in order to help fire departments retrieve water quicker in order to fight fires. Lower insurance rates can increase fire safety and improve rural living standards when dry fire hydrant systems are in use.

Annual Fee Hunting Workshops

Prairie Hills RC&D has planned and held seven workshops that explore the business of hunting brokerage for fun and profit. Over 400 farm families and other individuals have attended these informative workshops that describes the nature of fee hunting, risk and liability management issues, marketing, habitat development, and

insurance. The University of Illinois Extension Service collaborates with Prairie Hills RC&D on these workshops.

Tri-State Economic and Agricultural Development Partnerships

Prairie Hills RC&D has coordinated partnerships with four other RC&Ds in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri and the Tri-State Economic Development Summit along with Western Illinois University, regional and county economic development groups, and agricultural organizations. The purpose is to foster and promote value added agriculture, economic development, and river transportation issues. A mini summit was held for agriculture producers, marketers, economic development specialists, educators, and politicians to explore the dynamic parameters of agriculture and how these parameters can improve the quality of life for the citizens in the tri-state region. Braking down the political barriers of state boundaries and the physical barrier of the Mississippi River is essential for continued growth in the region.

Prairie Hills ONLINE

See our web sites at: www.prairiehillsrcd.org or www.prairiehillsforestry.com

Council Representatives

Members:

Glen Beeler, Hancock Co.
Charles Bell, Henderson Co.
David Brockley, Fulton Co.
Terry Boydstum, Knox Co.
Mike Dorethy, Fulton Co.
Curt Eisenmayer, Henderson Co.
Carl Erickson, Knox Co.
Jere Greuel, McDonough Co.
Jody Heavner, Henderson Co.
Tammy Heitzman, Fulton Co.
Mary Holmes, Hancock Co.
Yvonne Knapp, Henderson Co.
Neale Krider, Fulton Co.
Ed Owen, Hancock Co.
Carol Parrish, Warren Co.
Michael Pearson, Warren Co.
Eric Schenck, Fulton Co.
Larry Sterett, Henderson Co.
Carol Stombaugh, Warren Co.
Danny Terry, McDonough Co.
Don Walker, Hancock Co.
Rick Winbigler, Warren Co.
Patty Woodrum, McDonough Co.

Executive Board:

Donald Walker, President
Larry Sterett, Vice President
Jere Greuel, Secretary/Treasurer
Glen Beeler, Hancock Co.
David Brockley, Fulton Co.
Carl Erickson, Knox Co.
Rick Winbigler, Warren Co.

Revolving Loan Committee:

Jeff DeJoode
Mike Dorethy
Curt Eisenmayer
Jere Greuel
Michael Pearson
Don Walker
Patti Woodrum

Staff:

Jeff Hudgens, Professional Forester
David King, Coordinator
Betty Lewis, Program Assistant
Lindsay Towne, Forester
Vacant, Forest Technician

U. S. Congressional District:

17

IL Senatorial Districts

46, 47, & 48

IL Representative Districts:

91, 94, 95, & 96



The Prairie Rivers RC&D provides service to Bureau, LaSalle, Livingston, Marshall, Putnam, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties of Illinois.



3.5 million acres

Mission:

To foster communication, education, and problem-solving for the environmental and economic health of our area.

Background:

Prairie Rivers RC&D, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, which was created on November 30, 1989.

Current Projects and Activities:

Manual High School Greenhouse

Prairie Rivers RC&D and the Peoria County USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service worked with Manual High School in Peoria, Illinois in the implementation of Project TREES (Teaching Responsible Environmental Efficacy for Students). This project is a partnership for conservation education at Manual High School that will bring meaningful opportunities to inner city youth in non-traditional careers. The first portion of this project will be to institute a horticulture class into the curriculum, provide student internships, renovate the greenhouse, and establish a prairie on the school grounds.

Conservation Expo

Prairie Rivers RC&D is assisting the Illinois Land Improvement Contractor's Association and several other partners in coordination of a Conservation Expo to be held in August, 2001. The Expo will feature on-the-ground construction of conservation practices that will be integrated into a future conservation development, as well as agricultural conservation and wildlife practices. The show will also have tours, demonstrations, and special presentations.

Galena Trail and Coach Road

Prairie Rivers RC&D is assisting the Peoria County Galena Trail Committee with compiling a multi-media presentation. Pat Goitein, Chairman of the Committee, provided the staff with a myriad of beautiful color photos and other resources to document the trail's rich history.

Natural Resources and Your Development

The Natural Resources and Your Development Task Force has hosted two very successful conferences, a tour, eight workshops, and a roundtable within the last three years. The main focus of the Task Force is to educate, promote, and help implement economically and environmentally sound development. The Task Force continues to plan projects to

advance the concepts of incorporation of natural resources in the design and management of urban landscapes.

Toluca Coal Mine Preservation & Development

Toluca is located in eastern Marshall County, in the midst of what was once a vast prairie. The town was settled in the late 1800's as a coal supply depot for the Santa Fe Railroad. The mines operated until the 1920's, when diesel trains began to reduce the demand for coal along the rail line. Two large slag piles (fondly referred to locally as "the jumbos") remain as prominent features in the town. These mine remnants are owned by the city and define a "sense of place" for the community that offers unique recreational and natural heritage tourism opportunities for the region.

Prairie Rivers RC&D helped the community undergo a planning process on their vision of maintaining the Jumbos as a community landmark, communicating their mining heritage, and enhancing the property for wildlife, nature study, and complementary recreation. A concept plan was adopted and restoration work began in 2000. Funding for the initial stage of restoration was provided by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources - Dept. of Mines and Mineral through the Federal Coal Mine Reclamation program. The work included stabilizing the slag pile, covering it with topsoil, and construction of a pond. The restoration area has been seeded and trees will be planted.

Small Town Regional Urban Forestry Council

Prairie Rivers RC&D assisted the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in establishing a Small Town Regional Forestry Council for our area. The mission of the Small Town Regional Urban Forestry Council is to be a catalyst for local leadership and citizen involvement in community forestry.

A video entitled "Tree Cheers for Urban Forestry" and companion brochure have been produced. These are great tools for promoting the Council, promoting urban forestry, and encouraging participation by other communities and citizens. In the summer of 2000, the Council encouraged other communities to get involved by distributing trees to over 15 communities. Currently, the Council is working on the formation of a Speakers Bureau.

Perdew Museum

Prairie Rivers RC&D is assisting the City of Henry, and the Charles Perdew Museum Association in the development of the property known as the Perdew Home. Charles Perdew was born in Henry in 1874 and was a hunter and carver of decoys. Edna, his wife, was born in Henry in 1882. Their

marriage in 1902 formed an artistic partnership that lasted almost 60 years. The Perdews are nationally known for their duck decoy and duck call artistry and recognized as two of Illinois' best decoy artisans.

The Charles Perdew Museum Association has been the recipient of several grants for the stabilization, reconstruction, and renovation of the Charles Perdew Home and Workshop. Work began in the Fall of 2000 on the reconstruction of the workshop. The Association has also produced a video and companion brochure. The Association has also established an annual Perdew Days event held every October in Henry.

Reaching Out for Greener Landscapes

This purpose of this RC&D project is to foster the awareness of conservation development and smart growth; enhance the stewardship of land conversion and woodland acres; and facilitate the implementation of Forest Stewardship plans. Through the Peace Corps Fellow program at Western Illinois University, Prairie Rivers RC&D was able to sponsor a Peace Corps Fellow, Scott Paszkiewicz, who worked at our office for an 11-month internship on this project. A Natural Resource Stewardship Directory was developed which can be obtained from the local Soil and Water Conservation Districts in our nine-county area or viewed on our website at prairieriversrcd.org. Scott also worked on a Nut-Planting Demonstration site, which was part of the Illinois Valley Woodland Expo, and created a CD Power-Point Presentation on CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program).

Illinois Valley Woodland Expo

Prairie Rivers RC&D coordinated two Illinois Valley Woodland Expos, which were family-oriented events that featured live demonstrations, seminars, educational exhibits, a wood/natural crafts marketplace, children's activities, and musical entertainment. Interest in continuing the Woodland Expo sparked a community partnership between Illinois Valley Community College, the City of Ogelsby, and Prairie Rivers RC&D. The Expo was held on the college campus last summer. The theme of the Expo was "Preserving Our Heritage and Enriching Our Future." The event attracted nearly 6,000 visitors. Over 90 exhibitors were on hand to help spread the forestry message. A special feature was Roy Underhill, the Woodwright. Roy demonstrated his passion for woodworking with antique hand tools to a captivated audience.

Dry Hydrant Installations

Prairie Rivers received a grant through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to assist local fire departments in our 9 county area with the purchase of dry hydrants. In total, we have provided 29 dry hydrants to 22 fire departments in the last two years. Last August, a demonstration was held at Condit's Ranch, near Putnam, Illinois. Around 60 participants listened to an agenda full of related topics, and then witnessed a demonstration of the dry hydrant.

Council Representatives

County Board Representatives

Don Simon, Bureau Co.
Carol Trumpe, Peoria Co.
Joe Berardi, Tazewell Co.
Matt Tracy, Stark Co.
James Weichmann, Livingston Co.
Robert Jakupcak, LaSalle Co.
Jim Gray, Marshall Co.
Blaine Clancy, Putnam Co.
Pete Lambie, Woodford Co.

Members at Large

Nedda Simon, Bureau Co.
Keith Probyn, Peoria Co.
Erik Chaffer, Tazewell Co.
Mike Stahl, Stark Co.
Larry Martell, Livingston Co.
Laurie Papanos, LaSalle Co.
John Sears, Marshall Co.
Don Condit, Putnam Co.
To be filled, Woodford Co.

SWCD Representatives

To be filled, Bureau Co.
Arlan Janssen, Peoria Co.
Morris Wildermuth, Tazewell Co.
Art Witte, Stark Co.
Gerry Weller, Livingston Co.
Curtis Jorstad, LaSalle Co.
Bob Sloan, Marshall-Putnam Co.
Roger Fandel, Woodford Co.

Staff:

Kimberly St John, Coordinator
Lu Ann Vissering, Program Assistant

U.S. Congressional Districts:

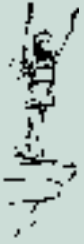
11, 14,15, 17, and 18

IL Representative Districts:

73,75, 76,87,88,89,90,91,92, and 93

IL Legislative Districts:

37, 38,44,45,46,and 47



The Shawnee RC&D Area, Inc. provides service to Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union, White, and Williamson Counties of Illinois.



4.0 million acres

Background

The RC&D program, authorized in 1962, is a USDA program governed by local people to help communities and organizations improve their economy and environment through conservation, development and better utilization of natural and human resources. The major objectives are to: 1) Bring about economic growth and development; 2) Help solve social concerns and 3) Provide for environmental protection.

Each RC&D Area is governed by a RC&D Council made up of representatives of County Boards, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and River Conservancy Districts. There are 8 funded RC&D Areas in Illinois, covering 60 counties. The Shawnee RC&D Area, Inc., founded in 1967, covers 4.0 million acres in 16 counties and its Council is made up of 50 representatives.

Mission:

The Shawnee RC&D Area, Inc. mission is to provide local leadership and the framework required to develop and carry out a plan of action for the conservation, development, and wise use of the resources of the area.

Current Projects and Activities:

Cache River Reforestation Project Phase II:

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency awarded a \$260,000 grant for the reforestation of 2,000 acres within the Cache River Watershed. This project is a recommendation of the Cache Watershed Resource Planning Committee in cooperation with the Johnson, Massac, Pulaski-Alexander, Pope, and Union County Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs); Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)-Forestry; USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Southern Illinois University-Carbondale; The Nature Conservancy; and U of I Forest Resource Center. This project offers financial and technical assistance for tree planting within the Cache River Watershed as well as provide forestry management education via the distribution of the "Managing Your Forestland" video produced by the Forestry Committee.

Southern 7 Geographic Information System (G.I.S.) Project

The Shawnee RC&D Council facilitated the authorization of the \$1.5 million digitized soil survey update in our seven southernmost counties. Twenty-two individual agencies and organizations signed the Illinois Cooperative Soil Survey

Agreement as co-sponsors. The Council was awarded a grant of \$99,300 from USDA Rural Development in support of the project. This project is nearing the completion planned for 2002.

Heartland G.I.S. Project

The Shawnee RC&D Council has completed the expansion of the digital soil survey program in Southern Illinois with the development of the Heartland GIS Project (Jackson, Perry, and Williamson Counties). The "Signature Ceremony" conducted in October 2000, highlighted two years of effort in creating the partnerships necessary to fund this five year soil survey project.

Southeast Illinois Brine Damage Reclamation Project

The Shawnee RC&D Council has been awarded a \$35,000 grant from EPA Section 319 Clean Water Program to conduct a demonstration of practical methods of reclaiming land damaged by salt spills. This project was developed by the Southeast Illinois Brine Damage Task Force, which covers Hamilton, Gallatin, Saline, and White Counties. The Task Force has developed a resource plan identifying three primary reclamation options using the application of minerals, organic matter, and/or plant materials.

Surplus Fire Protection Equipment

The Shawnee RC&D Area, Inc. in cooperation with the IDNR and USDA Forest Service, has provided more than \$12 million in military surplus fire protection equipment to rural fire protection districts in Illinois. This project is made possible through the efforts of an Earth Team volunteer and transportation provided by USDA-NRCS.

Conservation Fair

The Shawnee RC&D Council co-sponsors a major environmental education event at the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds for children in grade K through 5. This year 3,750 visitors attended the three-day event from Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, Washington, and Williamson Counties.

Cache River Wetlands Special WRP Project-Phase V

The Cache River Resource Planning Committee, in cooperation with the local Conservation Partnership, developed a \$9.2 million initiative designed to offer

conservation easements on 10,000 acres of marginal cropland damaged by wet conditions. USDA-NRCS has agreed to finance the cost of easement acquisition estimated at \$10 million and IDNR has agreed to finance the cost of restoration of the properties. The restoration activities are supported by The Nature Conservancy, USDA-FWS Cypress Creek Refuge, and \$1,000,000 from the Illinois C-2000 Ecosystems Program. To date, conservation easements have been filed on 8,400 acres.

Council Appreciation Picnic

The Shawnee RC&D Council hosted a picnic for Council members, cooperating agencies and local legislators at the DuQuoin State Fairgrounds. The picnic was attended by

75 people who enjoyed good food and the opportunity to become better acquainted in an informal atmosphere. Music was provided by the Rosa String Works from St Louis, MO.

Kinkaid Lake Shoreline Protection Project

The Shawnee RC&D Council has received a \$80,000 award from the IDNR C-2000 program for shoreline protection on critical areas of Kinkaid Lake. This is a cooperative effort of the Kinkaid Lake Area Watershed project, Kinkaid-Reeds Creek Conservancy District, USDA NRCS, Jackson Co. SWCD, and IDNR.

Council Representatives

County Board Representatives:

Andy Clarke, Chair, Alexander Co.
Harry Stewart, Chair, Franklin Co.
George Sisk, Gallatin Co.
William Burke, Hamilton Co.
Amanda Hayes Underwood, Hardin Co.
Bill Armstrong, Chair, Jefferson Co.
Max Ray, Chair, Johnson Co.
Dale Obermark, Chair, Massac Co.
Eric Pflanz, Perry Co.
Kelly King, Chair, Pope Co.
Harold Hargan, Chair, Pulaski Co.
Earl Mings, Saline Co.
Don Hankla, Union Co.
Ron Hargrave, White Co.
Phyllis Emery, Williamson Co.

SWCD Representatives:

Dale Shumaker, Alexander Co. SWCD
Bill Ruemmler, Franklin Co. SWCD
H. Jackson Logsdon, Gallatin Co. SWCD
Dennis Frey, Chair, Hamilton Co. SWCD
Vincent Baker, Chair, Hardin Co. SWCD
David Flexter, Jefferson Co. SWCD
Robert Mount, Johnson Co. SWCD
Daniel Burnett, Chair, Massac Co. SWCD
Gary Reidelberger, Chair, Perry Co. SWCD
Vincent Baker, Chair, Pope Co. SWCD
Rex Adams, Chair, Pulaski Co. SWCD
Tom Anderson, Saline Co. SWCD
Carlyn Light, Chair, Union Co. SWCD
Edward Beck, Chair, White Co. SWCD
Robert Nelson, Williamson Co. SWCD

River Conservancy Districts

Representatives:

Herbert McDerman, Chair, Bay Creek
Ralph Aly, Chair, Lusk Creek
Robert Wilson, President, Saline Valley

Members-At-Large:

Dave Close
Joe Fasig
Kathy McKinney
Dan Price
Jim Zaczeck

Council Officers:

Dan Price, Chair
Robert Nelson, Secretary-Treasurer
Dave Close, Forestry Committee Chair
Kathy McKinney, Info. Committee Chair

Information Committee

Kathy McKinney, Chair
Joe Fasig
Phyllis Mace

Forestry Committee

Dave Close, Chair
Chuck Medvick, Secretary
Robert E. Nelson, Treasurer

Staff

Jim Wallace, Coordinator
Lynn Jackman, Program Assistant
Jodi Hawkins, Grant Manager
Joe Frick, Forest Technician
Ernie Rhodes, Resource Conservationist

U.S. Congressional Districts:

12, 19, & 20

IL Senatorial Districts:

54, 58, & 59

IL Representative Districts:

107, 115, 117, & 118



The Southwestern Illinois RC&D provides service to Bond, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair, and Washington Counties of Illinois.

Mission

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. is a regional not-for-profit organization that works on issues and projects that accelerate the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources to improve the quality of life and to expand the economic base through natural resources.

Current Projects and Activities:

Animal Waste Guidebook

As part of an EQIP Education grant through NRCS, the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. contracted to write and produce a guidebook designed to help livestock producers understand, in layman's terms, the rules and requirements to maintain a clean and healthy environment. Methods include both actual and mechanical practices.

C2000 Partnerships

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. has been instrumental in securing \$1,063,594 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation 2000 program. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. currently contains the American Bottom Ecosystem Partnership, Shoal Creek/Kaskaskia River Ecosystem Partnership, and Carlyle Lake Ecosystem Partnership. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. has provided administrative support to both American Bottom and Shoal Creek/Kaskaskia River Ecosystem Partnership. Each year the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. has organized three meetings per partnership to solicit ideas, hone proposals, and rank final applications.

American Bottom Ecosystem Partnership

Twelve projects were submitted totaling \$1,229,958. The projects provided a match of \$211,010 with a grant request of \$960,598. Three projects were approved totaling \$253,985.

Shoal Creek/Kaskaskia River Ecosystem Partnership

The Shoal Creek/Kaskaskia River Ecosystem Partnership chose to expand the area to include the entire Shoal Creek watershed in the partnership. Several meetings were held throughout the year to add this area. The previous boundary split the Shoal Creek watershed in half and was divided by Rt. 40. With the expanded area, the partnership will need to revise the long range plan to incorporate the issues and concerns of this new area. In November 2000, a Kaskaskia River Summit was held in which 140 participants gathered to discuss concerns and address developments in the region.

Confluence Greenway

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. is one of seven collaborating partners working on the Confluence Greenway. Confluence Greenway is a 40-mile riverside on the Mississippi River from the Gateway Arch to the confluence of both the Illinois and Missouri Rivers. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. has been a partner in Confluence from the beginning and serves as one of two Illinois based organizations in the collaboration. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. is the lead non-profit in the Confluence Greenway collaboration to help with that effort. A major grant request was made to the Grand Victoria Foundation to help pay for a Project Manager to assist with the protection of the Island and to direct the Master Planning Process. In 2001, the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. will hire a Project Manager to carry out the objectives of the Island.

Stewardship

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. realized several years ago the need to protect private property through conservation easements. That realization became apparent with the Kaskaskia River Corridor Stewardship Plan. As a result, a separate non-profit land trust was created that focused its efforts on the Kaskaskia Forest.

However, even with this newly formed land trust, questions and inquiries were made to the RC&D for other lands and for a stronger protection program. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. Council directed the staff to determine the requirements for the RC&D to function as a land trust with the ability to hold donated conservation easements and donated land. Almost immediately, the office received serious requests from several landowners for protection options.

Norma Brown and family approached the RC&D in 1997 as to the possibility of placing a conservation easement on their property. The family spent quite some time pondering their options both pro and con to a conservation easement. The Southwestern Illinois area, at the time, had no local experts to not only draft the easement, but no financial experts who fully understood the financial benefits. A tremendous set back occurred in the progress of placing a conservation easement on the property when Norma Brown died in January 2000. The family embarked on creating the conservation easement that uses the most current thinking on conservation easements.

With much pressure, as the December 30th deadline approached, the family, the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. and the attorney's for both sides, met with an understanding that the measurement needed to be in place by the end of the year.

On December 30th the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. accepted a conservation easement for 79.453 acres totaling \$836,000. We will be working with others who are want to protect their land from being paved over or lost in a sea of homes. The Council wants to congratulate the Brown Family for their belief in conservation and open space.

The RC&D is working with several others to help them find the best mix of programs and regulations that protect their land.

Chemetco Settlement

On October 30, 2000 U.S. District Judge William Stiehl awarded Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. a \$400,000 settlement in the Chemetco Inc. case. As part of the \$3.86 million fine, \$400,000 was awarded to the RC&D. The judge has further directed that the RC&D administer this money towards environmental remediation projects in Madison County, south of the source of pollution. Special emphasis should be placed on the acquisition, restoration, and development of Chouteau Island.

Preliminary plans call for using the money to match IDNR funds for the development of a Chouteau Island master plan, using a portion for a Project Manager to coordinate Chouteau Island development, with the remainder being used for acquisition and restoration efforts.

Phytoremediation

In October, 2000, the RC&D was approached by NRCS and US EPA to conduct a demonstration "phytoremediation" project in E. St. Louis. Children of the community were being diagnosed with lead poisoning at an alarming rate. Upon review of their environments, it was discovered that the soils around their home had excessive lead levels that the children were coming in direct contact with.

Phytoremediation, is a process that uses plants to "grow" contaminants out of the soil. It is a fairly new science, with most of the research being done in the last decade. A hand-full of field demonstrations at ammunition sites and abandoned industrial sites have been conducted across the US over the past few years.

Dave Eustis, Operations Manager, has been researching the process since October and will be in charge of implementing the project in 2001. Sunflowers and varieties of the mustard plant will be used to collect lead in its stems and shoots. The tops of the plants will then be harvested and taken to a smelter of landfill or smelter for disposal.

The key to the project will be to adjust agricultural practices, soil amendments, and chemical applications to trick the plants into absorbing the lead, which they naturally have no affinity for.

The project is expected to take 3-5 years to reduce lead levels below EPA standards. However, funding is currently in place for the first year only.

Rural Water Mapping

In October 2000, the RC&D successfully completed the GIS Mapping of Rural Water Pilot Project. In total, 11 water districts in Southern Illinois were mapped—which exceeded expectations.

Individual water districts will have a permanent, digitized record of their infrastructure and the ability to incorporate customer information with the infrastructure information. Water district planners, engineers, county and municipal governments, regional planning organizations, USDA Rural Development and state and federal legislators will all have better planning tools with the new information. In February 2000, the RC&D submitted a C2000 application to IDNR to expand the scope of the project to a statewide level. Additional monies were sought from local legislators Dan Reitz and Frank Watson to finance the project.

The Statewide GIS Mapping of Rural Water Project accomplished all of the tasks of the original project and more. An additional grant application has been submitted for to support this grant. If approved, a Technical Assistance & Training grant through Rural Development will provide additional software training and a help desk to ensure technicians have the information needed to use the information.

Several states are reviewing the methods used in creating this mapping project.

Council Representatives

County Board Members

Danny Beard, Bond Co.
Jim Sullivan, Clinton Co.
Vacant, Madison Co.
Frank Kohler, Monroe Co.
Becky McClure, Randolph Co.
C. David Tiedemann, St. Clair Co.
Larry Unverfehrt, Washington Co.

Staff

Ed Weilbacher, Coordinator
David Eustis, Operations Manager
Yvette Dulle, Program Assistant

Local Members

JoAnn Joshu-Agne, SIMAPC

Members-At-Large

Mike VonderHaar, Bond Co.
Darrell Brink, Clinton Co.
Vacant, Madison Co.
Marvin Ries, Monroe Co.
Ed Crow, Randolph Co.
Richard Bossler, St. Clair Co.
David Droste, Washington Co.

SWCD Representatives

George Luber, Bond Co.
Edwin Varel, Clinton Co.
Wayne Poletti, Madison Co.
Ralph Buettner, Monroe Co.
Stephen Gonzalez, Randolph Co.
Patricia Watkins, St. Clair Co.
Gary Hongsermeier, Washington Co.

Council Officers

Patricia Watkins, Chairman
Stephen Gonzalez Vice-Chairman
Ed Crow, Sec/Treasurer

U.S. Congressional Districts:

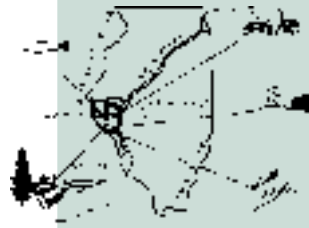
12 & 20

IL Senatorial Districts:

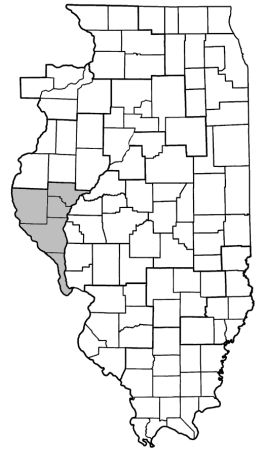
49, 55, 56, 57, & 58

IL Representative Districts:

98, 109 110, 111, 112, 113, 114 & 116



*The Two Rivers RC&D, Inc. provides service to
Adams, Schuyler, Brown, Pike, and Calhoun
Counties of Illinois.*



1.8 million acres

Mission:

To bring about economic improvement through the development of the natural resources, provide for environmental protection, and help solve the social concerns of the area.

Current Projects:

Since 1972, the Two Rivers Resource Conservation & Development Board of Directors has completed approximately 200 projects, totaling a value of more than \$22 million dollars. These funds were obtained from federal, state, and local units of governments, as well as non-governmental sources. The types of activities range from field days, demonstrations, workshops, seminars and meetings, to stocking of wild turkeys, creating the Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials, establishing the 478-acre Orr Agriculture Research Center at Perry, stabilizing 150 acres of critically eroding road banks, helping establish three rural water supply districts, creating the McCully Heritage Project, Ocean Farm, implementing the Access Illinois Outdoors program, and many other projects.

Technical and financial assistance to implement these projects has been provided by a number of state and federal programs and agencies including the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the state legislature, Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Illinois Department of Agriculture, USDA's Rural Development, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Services Agency, the U. S. Forest Service, and Extension Service.

Access Illinois Outdoors

The concept of Access Illinois Outdoors is to match landusers (both consumptive and non-consumptive) who wish to use private property for recreational purposes with landowners that are willing to allow these uses. Recreational activities include hunting, fishing, hiking, bird-watching, camping, trail riding, and photography. The program has a dual purpose of providing rural economic development, not only for landowners, but also for various businesses in the area and guaranteeing a place for recreational opportunities. Since its inception, more than 1,500 landusers, representing 33 states, Canada and Germany have enrolled. Almost 400 landowners are currently enrolled, representing 140,000 acres. Annual economic impacts to landowners and local businesses is estimated at \$10 million.

Youth Hunts

The Access Illinois Outdoors staff assisted IDNR in holding special hunts for young people. Selected youth were given classroom instruction on hunter ethics and taken on actual deer and turkey hunts. The hunts were held in Adams, Brown,

Calhoun, Pike and Schuyler Counties with cooperation from approximately 40 landowners. Eighty young people registered for the deer hunt with 24 hunters taking a deer. Thirty-five registered for the turkey hunt during this special one-day shotgun season. Facilities at the Orr Center were used for training seminars which included a lecture on proper hunting procedures, safety, laws and regulations; field dressing; shooting in a computerized interactive imaging setup; and shooting an actual gun. After training, youth were escorted to their designated hunting sites.

Handicapped Hunting

Arrangements by Access Illinois Outdoors staff have been made to allow physically challenged individuals the opportunity to hunt. Through the cooperation of landowners, hunters will be able to experience bow hunting for deer this fall. Arrangements may also be made for gun hunting where deer are causing excessive crop damage.

Deer Herd Management

The Quality Deer Herd Management program is a voluntary program designed to educate hunters and landowners to better manage native (whitetail) deer.

Reduction/Elimination of Out of State Hunting Permits

Reduction of out of state hunting permits is an issue of importance to the Two Rivers RC&D Board. Many contacts have been made encouraging legislators to support our effort of opposing any reduction or elimination of out of state hunters.

McCully Heritage Project

An environmental education and nature center at the 940 acre McCully Farm is an on-going project. The McCully Heritage Project, a not for profit 501(c)(3) corporation, was organized to provide environmental/conservation education to the public and particularly to area school children and teachers. An agreement has been developed with the regional office of education at Carlinville, Illinois, to provide an environmental education director and curriculum. This Tree Farm is used as an outdoor classroom for students and teachers within a 50-mile radius of the McCully Farm. There are over 12 miles of hiking trails on the farm. Two miles have 18 interpreted stops and can be taken by individuals with the use of a printed trail guide. The other trails are not interpreted but are available for hiking. A parking lot, picnic tables, toilet facilities for the handicapped, and a pavilion have been constructed. More trails and tent camping areas will be constructed. Two houses have also been renovated on the property, one for the environmental education program and one for lodging for hunters and others. A 6-acre wetland has been constructed with walkways to provide access to the area.

Grape Growing Promotion

The Two Rivers RC&D recognizes a need to promote grape production within the area. Illinois growers only supply about one-third of the grapes for Illinois wines; the remaining two-thirds are purchased from other states. In addition, Illinois only produces one-third of one percent of the wine consumed in the state, or some 85,000 gallons. Illinois as the fourth largest consumer of wine nationwide, this equates to a substantial economic loss for Illinois growers.

Two Rivers RC&D is administering a grant totaling \$32,250 obtained through the USDA Rural Development program to provide assistance to the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintner's Association (IGGVA). The grant funds permit IGGVA to organize and provide its members an executive director to serve as a central liaison, coordinating information, referral, promotion and organization of the grape and wine industry. The grant, along with a \$4,500 cash contribution from IGGVA and a \$3,500 contribution of in-kind services from the RC&D, will fund the position another two years.

The Two Rivers RC&D has also been instrumental in forming the Western Illinois Grape Producers Associated Corporation (WIGPAC), a co-op of area growers. They plan to buy and sell cooperatively and gain advantages of larger operators.

Shares in the co-op were available until January 31, 2001. WIGPAC held its second vineyard tour in September with over 125 people attending from Illinois and surrounding states. The tour started in Pittsfield and included three vineyards in Pike County and one in Calhoun County. Rural Development has provided funding through a Rural Enterprise Grant to help pay for some of the start-up costs of the cooperative. Grapes have been contracted through 2003.

Two Rivers 4x4 Club

Each May, the Two Rivers 4x4 Club holds one of the largest Jeep Jamborees in the United States adding over \$500,000 to the local economy. This event brings in over 400 people, many who return for visits throughout the rest of the year.

Orr Research Center

The Orr Research Center celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1999. Proposed expansions and improvements make this an on-going project of the Two Rivers RC&D. This 478-acre farm includes an Animal Science facility. It is an unusual environment where a community college (John Wood Community College) and a major university (University of Illinois) share educational opportunities and resources. A proposed Swine Center will provide a major swine management training, research and demonstration facility and program to meet the educational needs for those in the swine industry.

Parking Lot

Through surveys, the Two Rivers RC&D has determined a need for a commuter parking lot along I-72. Illinois Department of Transportation has reviewed the survey along with their own reviews and concurs that a parking facility would be beneficial in this area. This project has been included in the FY 2001-2004 funding for highway improvements.

Ocean Farm

Louis Reuschel, a farmer in Adams County, requested assistance from the RC&D Council in 1999. Mr. Reuschel had a dream of making his 150-acre farm available to the public. He wanted it to be more than a park, he wanted it to be a place where children and adults could learn about agriculture and the environment. The RC&D Board adopted this project and began the process of helping Louis organize and develop his dream. The property is located three miles east of Golden, Illinois. A 2 1/2 acre pond on the farm was named "The Ocean" by the Reuschel's granddaughter. Since then, the property has been known as the Ocean Farm.

He has established a contour strip cropping rotation that uses corn, soybeans, oats, alfalfa, and buckwheat. He has also enrolled 56 acres in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program as part of the LaMoine Watershed. The riparian areas will be planted to native hardwoods and adjacent areas have been planted to native prairie plants. The farm is nearing full organic certification. The park-like setting of the farm has made it a favorite for gatherings and field days.

Today, Ocean farm has completed its first phase. A Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant was used to organize the Advisory Board for the project, write a plan of action and develop a promotional brochure.

The second phase will include developing and using the farm for educational purposes. An agreement with the Regional Superintendent of Schools is being developed so that local schools can use the Ocean Farm as an outdoor classroom in the near future. An educational trail will be constructed and resource people will help develop a long term usage plan for the property. A historic windmill within four miles of the farm is nearly restored and will help bring visitors to the area.

The third phase is directed toward future funding and the longevity of the project. The applications for non-profit status are being completed. The Ocean Farm Foundation's task will be to secure funding to keep Louis' dream alive.

WISAS

The Western Illinois Sustainable Agriculture Society was organized by the Two Rivers RC&D, Inc. to promote sustainable agriculture practices in west central Illinois. The Society promotes the wise use of chemicals, planting of cover crops, reduced tillage and alternative crops. A quarterly newsletter is prepared by RC&D.

Council Representatives

County Board Members:

Ted Meyer, Adams Co.
Ed Barfield, Brown Co.
Vince Tepen, Calhoun Co.
Harry Wright, Pike Co.
Rod Schoonover, Schuyler Co.

SWCD Representatives:

Dennis Dittmer, Adams Co.
Kenny Kronable, Calhoun Co.
Charles Ferguson, Pike Co.
Beatrice Artis, Schuyler Co.

Members At Large:

Fred Bradshaw, Orr Corporation
Dorothy Deege, Adams Co.
Jim Elliott, Adams Co.
Jack Mitchell, Brown Co.
Bill Tepen, Calhoun Co.
Dr. Charles Guthrie, Calhoun Co.
Jerry Rodhouse, Pike Co.
Tammy Ator, Pike Co.

Board Officers:

Fred Bradshaw, President
Beatrice Artis, Vice President
Tammy Ator, Secretary-Treasurer

Staff:

Martha E. Sheppard, RC&D Coordinator
Brenda L. Middendorf, Program Assistant
Judy Smith, Access IL Outdoors Office Coord.

Congressional Districts:

17 & 20

IL Senatorial Districts:

48 & 49

IL Representative Districts:

95, 96, & 97



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*The Wabash Valley RC&D provides service to Clark,
Crawford, Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash,
and Wayne Counties of Illinois.*



1.8 million acres

Mission

Utilizing Wabash Valley resources to enhance the quality of life and environment for our communities.

Vision

To promote and provide leadership in resource management and economic growth in the Wabash Valley.

Council Projects and Activities

Wabash Cannonball Bridge

The Council worked with the local citizens of St. Francisville in their efforts to purchase an abandoned railroad bridge over the Wabash River. Assistance provided was in direction and discussions about the benefits of re-establishing the timber deck.

GIS Workshop

In 1993, the Council conducted a Geographic Information System (GIS) demonstration workshop at Red Hills State Park. The joint effort with computer hardware and software vendors showed the benefits of computer maps to county assessors, board members, SWCD directors, and land use planners.

Dry Fire Hydrants

Since 1998, the council has obtained grant money for the purchase of over 50 fire hydrants kits that have been installed in rural areas. This program called the Dry Hydrant program provides for the local rural fire districts to install non-pressurized PVC pipe in ponds and other bodies of water that are accessible to local fire departments. This program places water hook ups in remote areas that are underserved by adequate water supplies for fire fighting.

Allendale Outdoor Classroom

A plan has been developed and is being implemented with the assistance of the RC&D Council for an outdoor classroom and landscape project at the new Allendale Grade School. Features include a windbreak, prairie grass and flower plantings, a walking path, heritage trees, and a field border for wildlife habitat.

Timber Bridge Initiative

Like other rural areas, the Valley has old road bridges made of concrete and steel that are deteriorating and need replacement. Replacement costs tax local units of government. The Wabash Valley RC&D Council is working at bringing timber bridge technology to the area. Bridges (like the Wabash Cannonball Bridge) made of wood are strong, durable, and made from a renewable resource. Bridge decks made of wood are immune to damage by winter salt and other corrosive materials. Two sites have been identified as candidate sites for new timber bridges. A workshop held for March 2001 will expose county highway engineers, road commissioners, county and SWCD board members, and RC&D council representatives to the timber bridge concepts.

Professional Forestry Assistance

A new service is being provided by the RC&D Council to landowners who wish to manage and enhance their forest resources. In less than one year's time, the Council's forester has marked over 250,000 board feet of timber for sale by landowners. The forester marks, inventories, sends out bid notices to buyers, and draws up a sale agreement for landowners in the Valley to ensure that they are getting a fair and well managed sale of their timber.

Council Representatives

County Board Representatives

Jim Preston, Lawrence Co.
Mark Kapper, Richland Co.
Don Lowery, Clark Co.
Joe Bliss, Crawford Co.
Tom Hortin, Edwards Co.
Charles Sanders, Wabash Co.
Jack Fearn, Wayne Co.

Conservancy District Reps.

John Raber, Bonpas Creek
Terry Hammond, North Fork

SWCD Representatives

Chuck Daugherty, Lawrence Co.
Emery Oesch, Richland Co.
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Johnny Neeley, Crawford Co.
Loren Pollard, Edwards Co.
Gary Buchanan, Wabash Co.
George Gray, Wayne Co.

Executive Council

Joe Bliss, President
Gary Buchanan, Vice President
Jim Preston, Secretary/ Treasurer

Congressional District:

19

Legislative District:

54

Representative Districts:

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